Visiting the Zoo's Great Ape House

National Zoo Social Narrative: Great Ape House

Smithsonian
National Zoological Park
Conservation Biology Institute

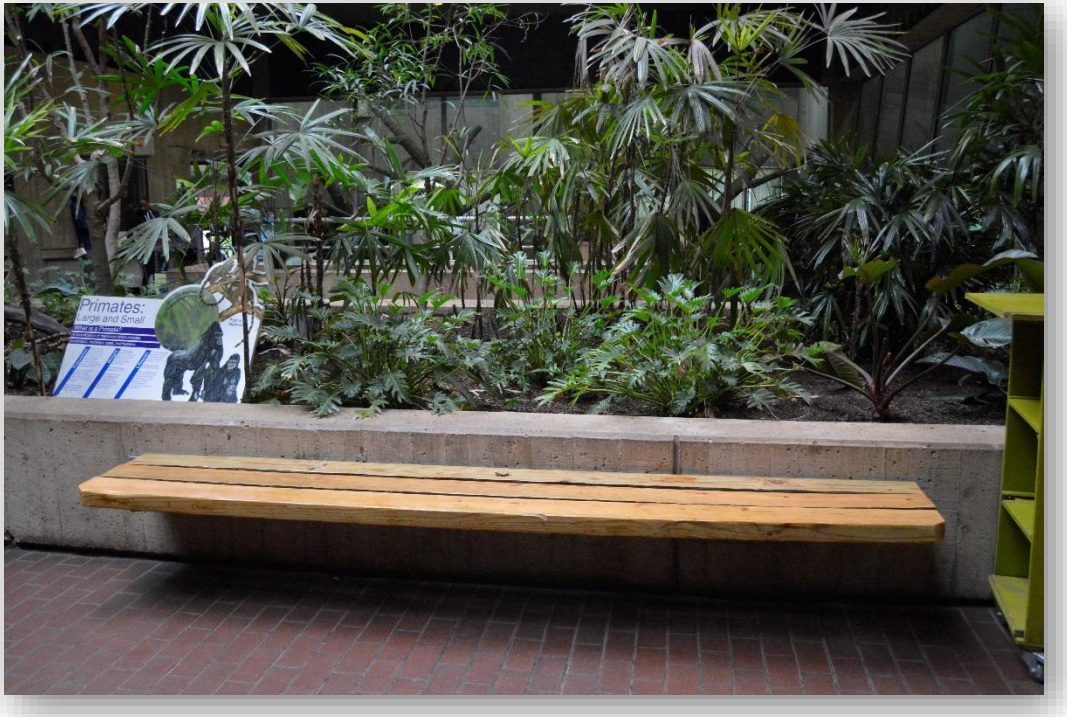
There are many animals to visit at the Zoo.
Today, I am going to visit the Great Ape House.

I know I have arrived at the Great Ape House when I see a large arch with a sign that says **Great Ape House**.

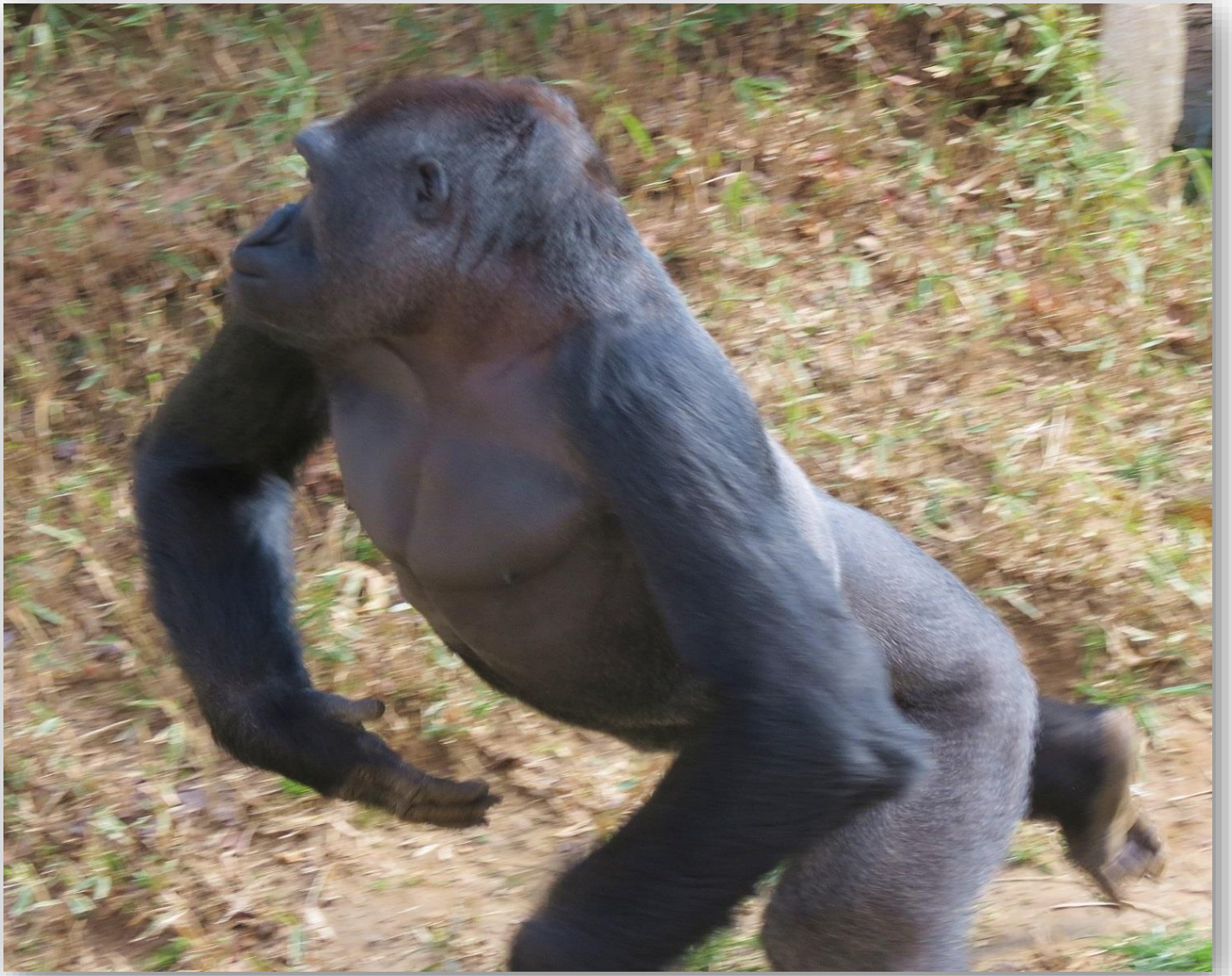
I may see big exhibits and lots of people looking at the apes.
The people may be loud with excitement.
There may also be a strong smell.

SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL ZOO
& CONSERVATION BIOLOGY INSTITUTE

There will be benches near the entrance. I can sit on the benches if I want to.

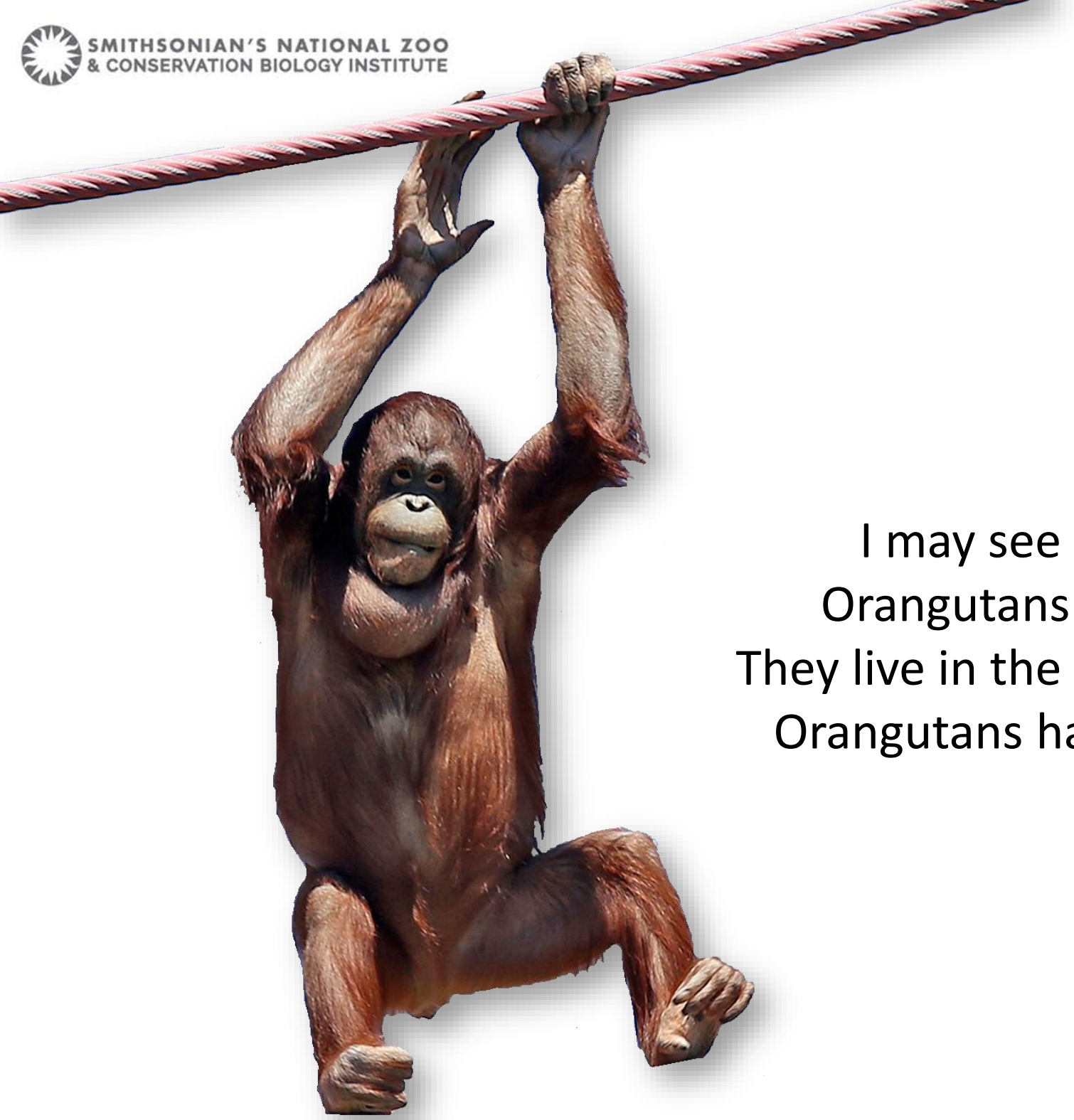


I may see gorillas.
Gorillas are primates.
They live in the Great Ape House.
Gorillas have a strong scent.



I may see a gorilla beat his chest, run, throw a toy or hit the glass. These behaviors are called displays. Gorillas display to show how strong they are.

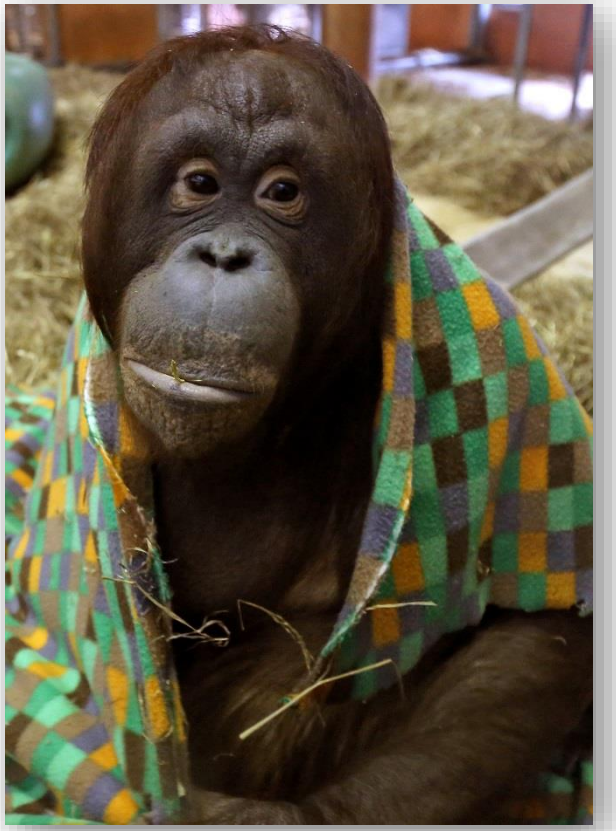
SMITHSONIAN'S NATIONAL ZOO
& CONSERVATION BIOLOGY INSTITUTE



I may see orangutans.
Orangutans are primates.
They live in the Great Ape House.
Orangutans have reddish hair.

The apes live indoors behind glass.
I can look through the glass but should not touch it.

The enclosures are large and have places for the apes to climb up high.

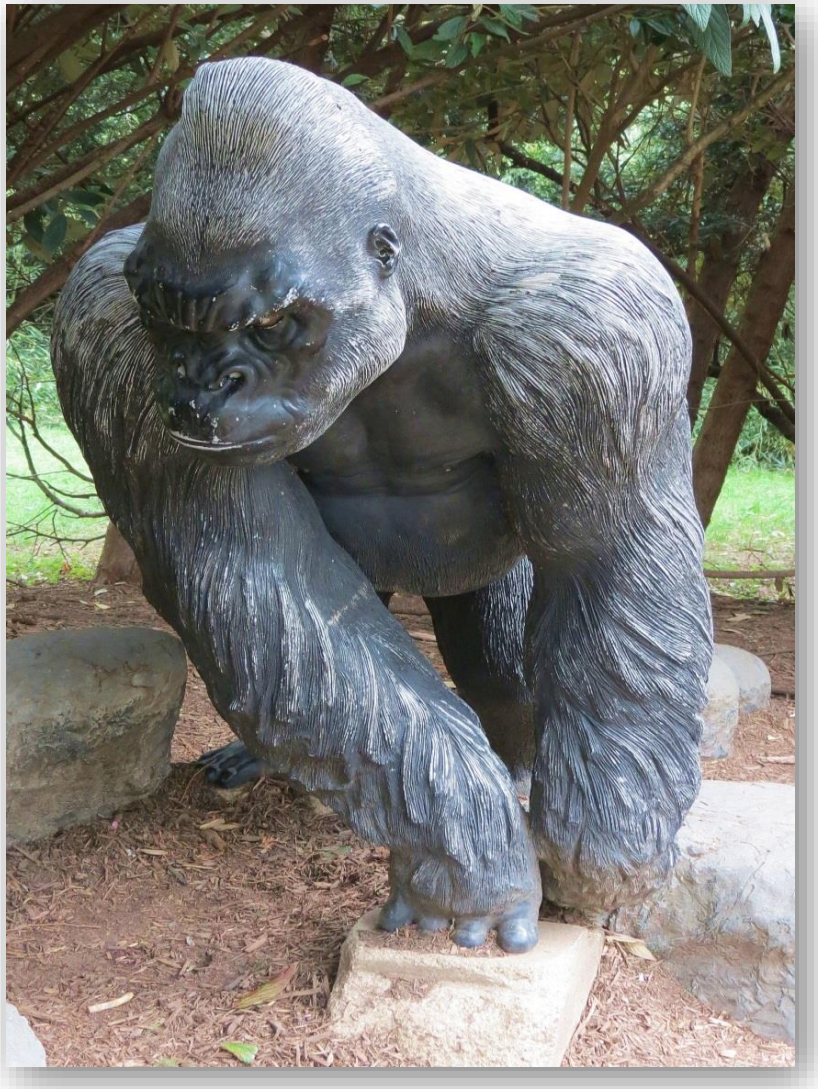


I may see toys like mirrors, crates and blankets in the enclosures. These are for the great apes to play with.

The gorillas have an outdoor yard.
They enjoy being outdoors and sitting in the sun.

I may see a zoo keeper putting bamboo in the enclosures for the apes to eat. The gorillas and orangutans love to eat bamboo.

I may see a tall wooden structure in the gorilla yard.
They like to climb the structure and sit up high.

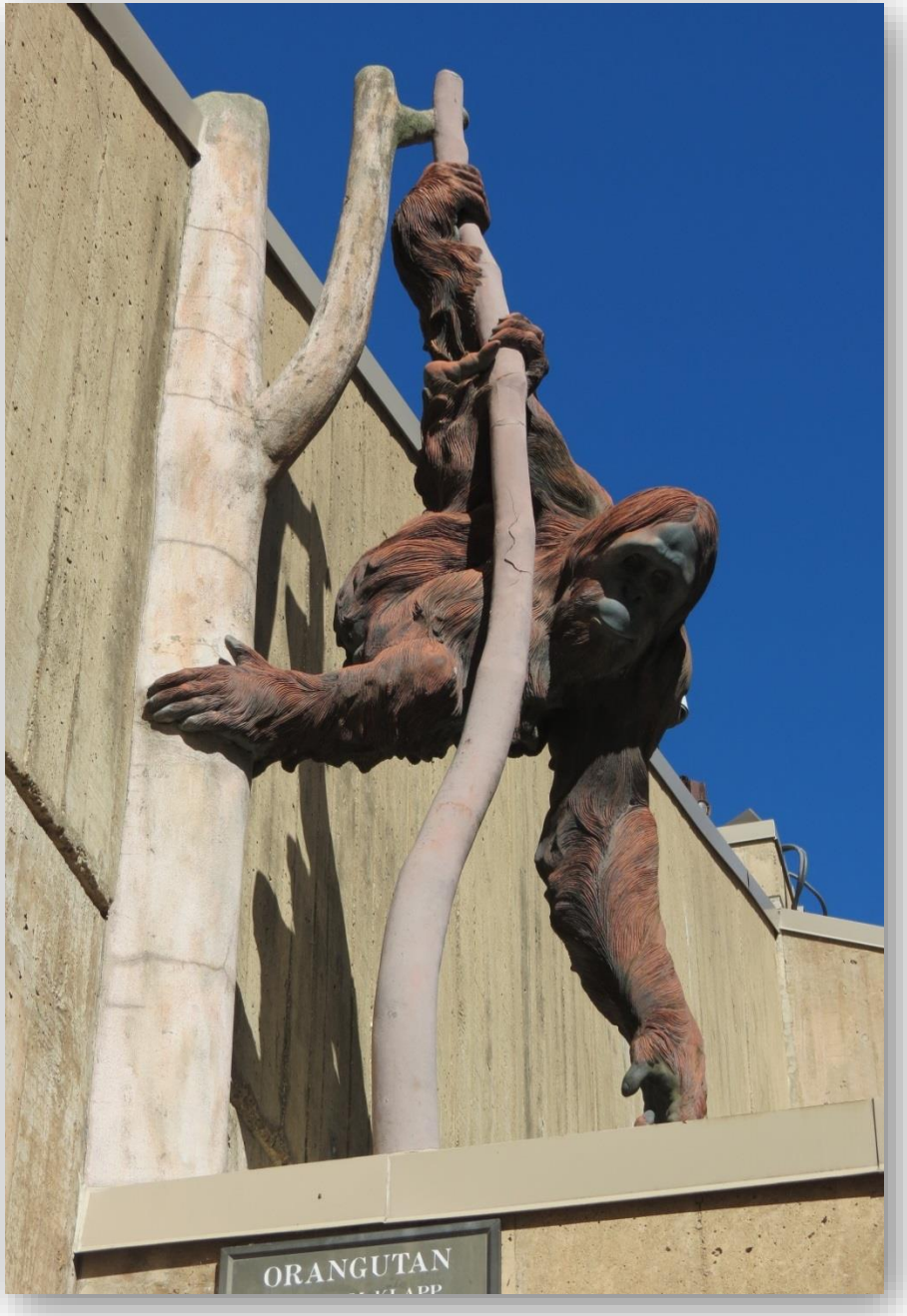


I may see two gorilla statues near the gorilla yard.
I can touch them if I want to.

The orangutans have an outdoor yard, too.
They like to climb up the blue tower.

If I look up, I may see long ropes between the tall blue towers. This is called the O-line.

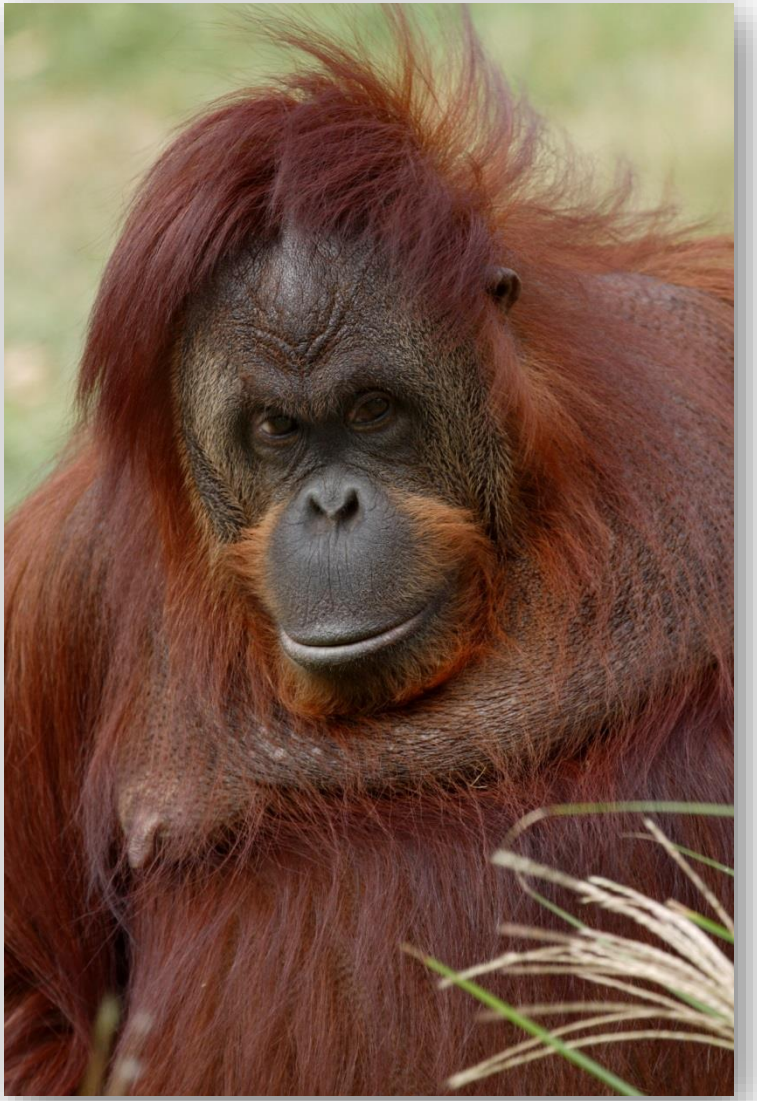
I may see an orangutan crossing over the O-line above my head. The orangutan is moving like a wild orangutan would move through the trees and it will not fall down.

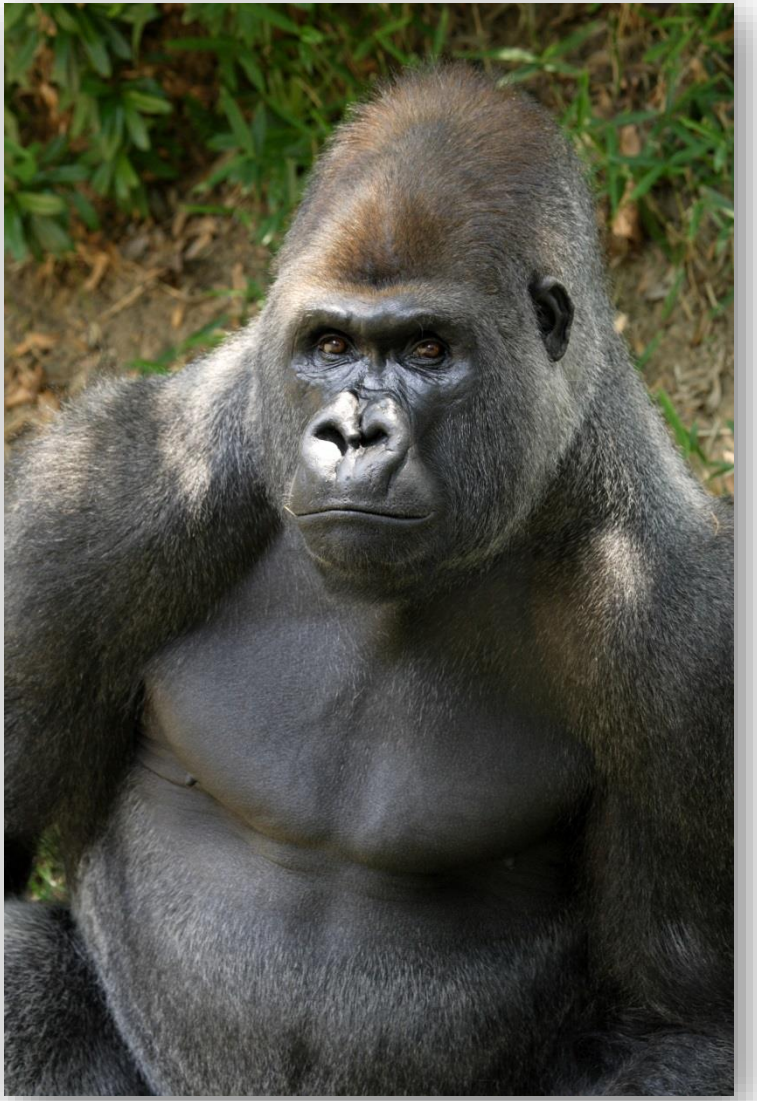


When I leave the Great Ape House, I may see an orangutan statue if I look up high.

There are other places in the zoo that I can visit to see more animals.

I can stay and watch the gorillas and the orangutans.
I may see them eating food, playing with each other or sleeping.
They may even look at me.





The orangutans and gorillas are the large primates that live in the Great Ape House. I may see other kinds of primates in different areas at the zoo.